

# Tortoise Tracks



The Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee, Inc.

Spring 2014 34:1

## ***Celebrating 40 years: The DTPC Annual Meeting & Banquet***



On January 25, 2014, the Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee (DTPC) celebrated their 40th anniversary at their Annual Meeting and Banquet at the Palmdale Hotel in Palmdale, California.

The annual meeting included a presentation by the Bureau of Land Management, Ridgecrest Field Office on existing and upcoming projects. The DTPC Treasurer, **Laura Stockton**, presented the year-end financial report; **Jun Lee** with Lee Law Firm provided an overview of recent land acquisitions and mitigation; and **Mary Logan**, the DTPC Preserve Manager & Conservation Coordinator presented a review of the year's stewardship activities, research projects, and educational outreach programs, as well as goals for the coming year. DTPC members were given the opportunity to vote on the revisions to the DTPC Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, which included defining the primary focus of the DTPC's efforts on the *Gopherus agassizii* species of the desert tortoise, provisions for electronic communications and web-hosted board meetings, and the reclassification of DTPC board members. Thanks to everyone who voted at the meeting and by mail, telephone, or email, we heard from over 20% of our membership and were able to approve the revised Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation.

Following the annual meeting, banquet attendees enjoyed a social hour and had the opportunity to participate in a raffle that included several beautiful donations from DTPC members as prizes. Memorabilia covering the DTPC's past 40 years decorated the banquet room, while a slideshow of shared memories collected from members, volunteers and partners played throughout dinner.

The guests were entertained with a video entitled "Tortoise Tracks 2—The Sequel," created by Lancaster High School students, with the assistance of their teacher, **Glen Baumbach**. The film portrays the students' involvement in and reflections about the DTPC's Fall 2013 Work Party. (Visit <http://vimeo.com/85374563> to view "Tortoise Tracks 2—The Sequel.")

During the annual awards ceremony, a small photo plaque was awarded to LightHawk for donating flights for aerial monitoring of the DTRNA and Expansion Areas, Pilot Knob, and properties in the Chuckwalla Bench. Two volunteer pilots, **Jo Duffy** and **John Kamburoff**, received the award on behalf of LightHawk.

(Continued on page 2)

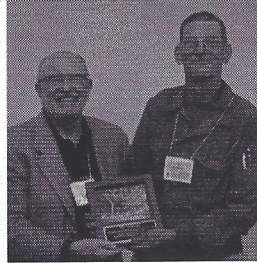


(Continued from page 1)

**Richard Anderson** was awarded with a small photo plaque for his contribution of filming at DTPC events to make presentations available to the entire DTPC membership and general public.



**Will Liebscher** was awarded a small photo plaque for his major contributions of time and effort at work parties and for other stewardship projects. His work installing signs and scouting project areas to help plan events has been especially helpful.



**Bonny Ahern** and **Craig Bansmer** were presented with a large photo plaque for substantial land monitoring efforts and help coordinating work parties. Their detailed notes, coordinates, and maps of unexploded ordnance on the Pilot Knob parcel greatly assisted the Edwards Air Force Base Explosive Ordnance Disposal team in removing these hazards later in the year



**Shelley Ellis** and **Carrie Woods**, wildlife biologists with the BLM, Ridgecrest Field Office were each awarded a large photo plaque for their efforts in desert conservation, and especially their help with the spring naturalist program, work parties, and other research and management projects at the DTRNA.

**Tim Shields** was also presented with a large photo plaque for his work on tortoise surveys at the DTRNA, his participation in the raven nest surveys in 2013, and his recent work on the updated Mojave Desert Discovery Centers.



**Mark Bratton**, a Trustee from 2006 to 2012, was awarded a Board of Trustees photo plaque. Mark was active in many of the DTPC's stewardship projects, served as the Vice President and President of the Board, and helped select and supervise DTPC employees.

**Steve and Marlene Ishii** were also presented a Board of Trustees photo plaque. Steve and Marlene were Trustees from 2010 to 2012 and conduct much of the DTPC's baseline and annual land monitoring and inspection. Steve has worked to obtain



Tread Lightly! grants, updated DTPC's Bylaws, upgraded computer systems, compiled a land monitoring handbook for volunteers, and led monitoring training in Spring 2013. Marlene was

Secretary for the Board of Trustees, coordinated the DTPC webpage renovation, and has put together the Tortoise Tracks newsletter for several years. Steve and Marlene also pursued aerial monitoring of DTPC lands through LightHawk.

The prestigious Golden Tortoise Award was awarded to the DTPC's founder, **Dr. Kristin Berry**. Dr. Berry's dedication and desire to preserve the desert tortoise and its habitat has been a driving force for the Committee over the past 40 years.



This year's presentation at the Annual Banquet was entitled "Reflections of the Past and Plans for the Future" and included reflections from past board members, scientists who have studied at the DTRNA, past naturalists, long-time volunteers, and agency partners who have helped the Committee in its mission of protecting the desert tortoise and its habitat. Current board members also spoke about their vision for the years ahead.

The accomplishments of the Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee, Inc. over the past 40 years have been made possible by dedicated members, volunteers, and partners. The DTPC would like to thank all of its members and volunteers for their hard work and support.

***We look forward to seeing you next year!!***

Video from the banquet can be found at:  
<http://vimeo.com/85593678>

---

## Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee, Inc. News Release

---

For Immediate Release: March 4, 2014

Contact: Mary Logan (951-683-3872) or [dtpc@pacbell.net](mailto:dtpc@pacbell.net)

---

### **THE DTPC INVITES PUBLIC COMMENTS ON OHV GRANT APPLICATION**

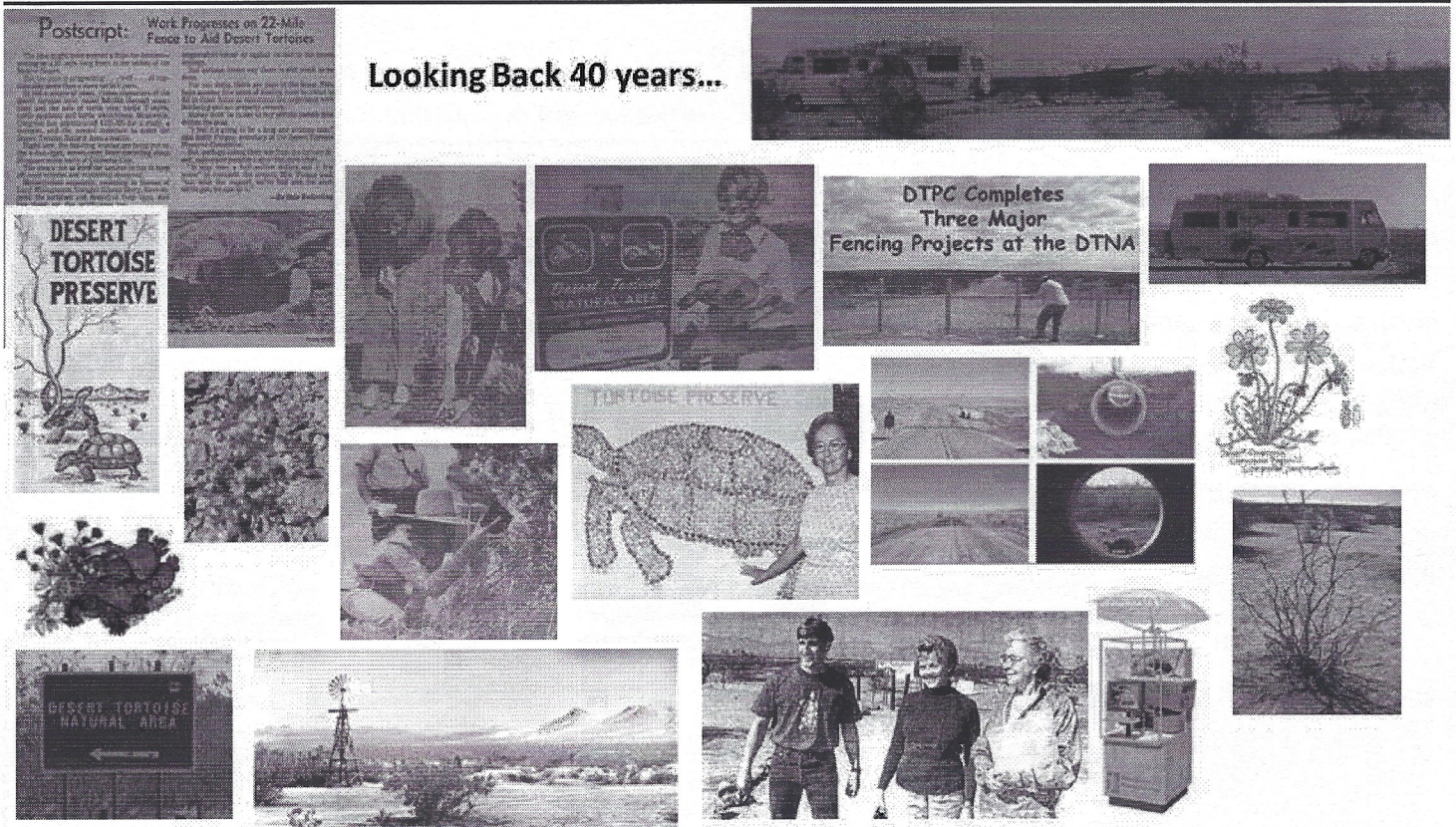
The Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee (DTPC) invites public comments on its preliminary grant application to the California State Parks Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Division.

The DTPC is requesting funding for a restoration project in the Expansion Areas of the Desert Tortoise Research Natural Area, which abut authorized OHV routes managed by the Bureau of Land Management and California City Police Department. The purpose of the Restoration Grants Program, as defined by the OHMVR Division, is to provide Ecological Restoration or Repair to habitat damaged by authorized or unauthorized OHV use. The DTPC seeks restoration funds to prevent continued habitat degradation related to unauthorized OHV activity on approximately 4,400 acres of conservation lands, and to begin restoration of the disturbed areas to their natural state. If funded, the DTPC will install wildlife-friendly fencing around areas of contiguous conservation lands and will use vertical mulching and other techniques for camouflage restoration of unauthorized routes in areas where fencing is not feasible. The DTPC will work with restoration crews and volunteers to remove trash from the restoration sites and to control invasive plant infestations along closed, unauthorized routes. Additionally, if conditions allow, the DTPC will begin collecting native seed for future revegetation projects.

The DTPC would appreciate your comments on this project. You can review the grant application, along with those from other agencies, local governments, and non-profits, on-line at [www.ohv.parks.ca.gov](http://www.ohv.parks.ca.gov). The public comment period is open from Tuesday, March 4, 2014 until Monday, April 7, 2014. Comments should be sent directly to the OHMVR Division at [ohvinfo@parks.ca.gov](mailto:ohvinfo@parks.ca.gov) and to the DTPC at [dtpc@pacbell.net](mailto:dtpc@pacbell.net). Late comments will be forwarded to the division separately. Final grant applications are due May 5, 2014.

For more information about the proposed restoration project, please contact Mary Logan at (951) 683-3872 or [dtpc@pacbell.net](mailto:dtpc@pacbell.net).

---



**Can we save Mojave desert tortoises by moving them out of harm's way?**

*Feds aim to save threatened tortoises by relocating them away from development*

Article by Emily Green, HIGH COUNTRY NEWS (August 5, 2013) - Kristin Berry's khaki hat flaps in the wind as she bends to inspect the skeleton of a desert tortoise. Remnants of its head and neck are still attached to the carapace, and bleached bones protrude from it. It's been dead for about four years, she suspects, and "appears to have died in a relaxed position," she says, "with its legs out." That suggests starvation and dehydration, but the 70-year-old biologist can't be sure.

It's the second week of April, when wild tortoises typically emerge from hibernation to forage on the spring wildflowers that briefly brighten the Mojave Desert. Berry — who does long-term research on the desert tortoise for the U.S. Geological Survey — is the acknowledged authority on where the now-threatened reptiles once thrived.

The rock outcropping where she stands is not far from I-15, halfway between L.A. and Las Vegas. Basalt hills rise to the north and west, and a cavalcade of power lines runs south. To the east, ORV tracks surround a makeshift bull's-eye riddled with bullet holes and what remains of a desert tortoise burrow. An empty Coors can is lodged in the burrow's entrance.

The ex-tortoise next to Berry wasn't hatched here. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service moved it and about 600 others 40 miles from their native range near Barstow, Calif., when the Army's Fort Irwin was expanded in 2008. Berry has been tracking it, and 157 other displaced tortoises. So far, perhaps half of the relocated animals are still alive. Nobody knows if that is good, bad or typical, or if the decline will continue. Berry's study will pit her carefully accrued survival data against the increasingly popular idea that desert tortoises can be protected, not by diverting development, but by moving animals.

This process is called "translocation." Since the desert tortoise came under Endangered Species Act protection in 1989, translocation has become the default solution to conflicts between people and tortoises. Thousands of tortoises have been moved to make way for modern Las Vegas, and for other desert development projects. Now, thousands more may be dug up to fast-track industrial-scale solar and wind farms throughout the Mojave.

For full article, visit: <http://www.hcn.org/issues/45.13/can-we-save-mojave-desert-tortoises-by-moving-them-out-of-harms-way>



## Upcoming Spring Events!

### **DTRNA Naturalist Season, March 11 to June 8, 2014:**

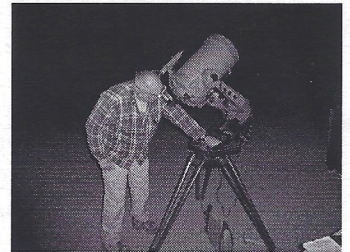
Returning naturalists, Hanna Strauss & Lisa LaVelle, are on-site at the Desert Tortoise Research Natural Area (DTRNA) Interpretive Center to answer questions, lead tours, and monitor wildlife activity. The DTRNA is open to the public everyday from 8 AM to 5 PM.

### **Interpretive Hikes, every Saturday and Sunday morning in April & May:**

The naturalists will lead guided hikes leaving from the DTRNA Interpretive Center at 9 AM every Saturday & Sunday in April & May. Please call (951) 683-3872 to schedule tours or programs at other times.

### **Star Party at the DTRNA, March 29, 2014:**

Join us for a night of star gazing and nocturnal wildlife walks at the DTRNA. During the new moon, volunteers from the China Lake Astronomical Society will be setting up high powered telescopes and showing us the sky, while naturalists will lead searches for reptiles, scorpions, and other animals out at night. Starts at dusk, around 6:30 PM.



### **Bird Walk at the DTRNA, March 30, 2014:**

California City resident and birder, Laura Mogg, will lead a birding hike at the DTRNA. Participants will meet at the DTRNA Interpretive Center at 8 AM.



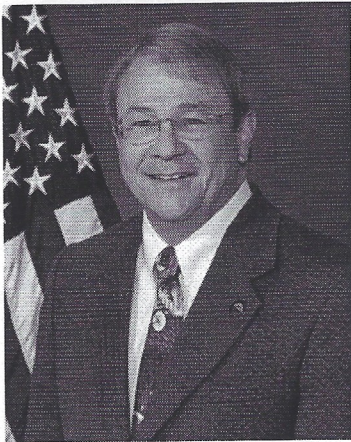
### **Spring Work Party, April 5-6, 2014:**

Please join us for this volunteer stewardship event! On Saturday, April 5, we will be working at the DTRNA, meeting at the Interpretive Center at 9 AM. For those who are interested, we will also be heading to the Pilot Knob area (east of Highway 395) for camping on Saturday night and stewardship activities on Sunday, April 6. The Work Party is a great opportunity to learn more about the Mojave Desert, the desert tortoise, and habitat conservation techniques, while contributing to the restoration and stewardship efforts of the DTPC. Stewardship priorities this spring include trash removal, fence maintenance, and replacement of faded signs. On Sunday, we will be monitoring conservation lands in the Pilot Knob area. For those who are interested in becoming volunteer land monitors, we will be providing training with our protocols for surveying DTPC properties and potential acquisitions.



For more information go to : <http://www.tortoise-tracks.org/wptortoisetracks/volunteer-opportunities/>

Please contact the DTPC office at (951) 683-3872 or [dtpc@pacbell.net](mailto:dtpc@pacbell.net) to RSVP or request more details about any of our upcoming events.



## Mr. Robert Wood Board of Directors

I am a geographer and have been employed by the Department of Defense for 42 years in every aspect of planning. After returning from Vietnam I was employed by the US Army Corps of Engineers in Los Angeles where for 12 years I prepared recreation master plans, water resource plans, flood control plans, and prepared Environmental Impact Statements and Clean Water Act and Navigation permits. I was successful in protecting petroglyphs, getting an archaeological museum built, protected a large Mesquite Bosque, wetlands in Southern California, habitat for threatened and endangered species, hundreds of miles of hiking, equestrian, and bicycle trails, numerous picnic and athletic fields, and once planned the movement of a small farming community out of the flood plain of a river into a new community built safely out of the flood plain.

In 1985 I moved my family to Lancaster and went to work at Edwards Air Force Base as a long-range planner; I envisioned the environmental, facility, air space and community relations requirements for base missions 10 to 50 years in the future. The base had violated nearly every environmental, public health and industrial safety regulation and I was asked by the Center Commander to find out how bad it was and develop a plan to bring the base into compliance. For the next 26 years I turned an organization with 3 full time employees into one of the largest and most effective and successful environmental organizations in the DOD.

The Mojave Desert has endured hundreds of thousands of years of climate change; plants and animals have evolved, adapted, moved to new areas, and died off. The ecological health of the lands we manage depends a lot on how well we understand and plan for changes to the climate; the scope and impact of renewable energy projects; and recreation, transportation, urbanization and military uses of the entire southwestern desert. Throughout my career I have found ways to include and integrate the most important and popular land use requirements into a single understandable and executable plan. I am honored and excited to serve on the DTTC Board of Directors and hope my planning and future vision experience will protect and enhance the desert habitat and ecology for the Desert Tortoise and all desert plants and animals.

### Looking to get more involved?

If you have a deep concern for the continued preservation of the desert tortoise and its habitat and would like to do more to help promote the welfare of the Mojave Desert, contact us at (951) 683-3872 or by email at [dtpc@pacbell.net](mailto:dtpc@pacbell.net) for details on different service committees, Board activities, and other volunteer opportunities. There are many ways to help!

DTTC is an IRS recognized tax-exempt 501 (c)(3) nonprofit corporation.



**Preserve Manager & Conservation Coordinator**  
Mary Logan

Telephone: (951) 683-3872

Fax: (951) 683-6949

Email: [dtpc@pacbell.net](mailto:dtpc@pacbell.net)

<http://www.tortoise-tracks.org>



Become a fan by clicking "Like" on our Page  
<http://www.Facebook.com/DTTC.inc>

### The Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee, Inc.

Founded 1974

#### Board of Directors

President	Ron Berger
Vice President	Open
Treasurer	Laura Stockton
Recording Secretary	Rachel Woodard
Board Member	Kristin Berry, Ph.D.
Board Member	Greg Lathrop
Board Member	Freya Reder
Board Member	Bob Wood
Board Member	Dave Zantiny

## DTPC Calendar of Events

**March 29, 2014, 6:30 pm to 11:00 pm:** DTRNA Star Party & Nocturnal Wildlife Walks, DTRNA, California City, CA

**March 30, 2014, 8:00 am to 10:00 am:** Bird walk at the DTRNA, California City, CA

**April 5-6, 2014:** DTPC Spring Work Party

**April 12, 2014, 9:30 am to 2:00 pm:** Board of Directors Meeting, DTPC Office, Riverside, CA

### The DTPC would like to thank the following volunteers & speakers:

- |                          |                                  |                         |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>Ron Berger</i>        | <i>Mary Christopher</i>          | <i>Ed LaRue</i>         |
| <i>Dr. Kristin Berry</i> | <i>Mike Connor</i>               | <i>Greg Lathrop</i>     |
| <i>Laura Stockton</i>    | <i>Roger Dale</i>                | <i>Jun Lee</i>          |
| <i>Rachel Woodard</i>    | <i>Jo Duffy, LightHawk</i>       | <i>Will Liebscher</i>   |
| <i>Bob Wood</i>          | <i>Chuck Hemingway</i>           | <i>Charles Peterson</i> |
| <i>Dave Zantiny</i>      | <i>Brian Henen</i>               | <i>Tim Shields</i>      |
| <i>Heene Anderson</i>    | <i>Marlene Ishii</i>             | <i>Glenn Stewart</i>    |
| <i>Bonny Ahern</i>       | <i>Steve Ishii</i>               | <i>Pete Woodman</i>     |
| <i>Craig Bansmer</i>     | <i>Becky Jones</i>               |                         |
| <i>Glen Baumbach</i>     | <i>John Kamburoff, LightHawk</i> |                         |

More information for each event can be found by calling (951) 683-3872 or sending an email to [dtpc@pacbell.net](mailto:dtpc@pacbell.net).

### DESERT TORTOISE PRESERVE COMMITTEE, INC.

#### MEMBERSHIP/DONOR FORM

NAME _____	DATE _____
ADDRESS _____	RENEWAL <input type="checkbox"/>
CITY _____	NEW <input type="checkbox"/>
STATE _____ ZIP _____	

- |                       |                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Individual membership | \$ 15 annually [ ] |
| Family membership     | \$ 20 annually [ ] |
| Sponsor membership    | \$ 30 annually [ ] |
| Benefactor membership | \$ 75 annually [ ] |
| Patron membership     | \$100 annually [ ] |
| Life                  | \$500              |

Membership Dues	\$ _____
Additional Donation	\$ _____
Total Enclosed	\$ _____

**DONATION ONLY**  
 Enclosed is my donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to DTPC and mail to:  
 DTPC  
 4067 Mission Inn Avenue  
 Riverside, CA 92501

The DTPC is an IRS recognized tax-exempt 501 (c)(3) nonprofit corporation (tax ID 23-7413415). All contributions above the basic \$15 annual membership dues are tax-deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

All contributors receive the quarterly newsletter *Tortoise Tracks*.

Membership and donor information are kept confidential and will not be disclosed to third parties.

#### I WANT TO VOLUNTEER

My area of interest/expertise is:  
 \_\_\_\_\_

My E-mail address is:  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**For more information on becoming a DTPC member, you can also contact us at (951) 683-3872 or visit our website at: <http://www.tortoise-tracks.org/wptortoisetracks/become-a-member>**



# Tortoise Tracks

THE DESERT TORTOISE PRESERVE COMMITTEE  
4067 MISSION INN AVENUE  
RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA 92501

NONPROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
RIVERSIDE, CA  
PERMIT NO. 3216

Address Service Requested



[www.Facebook.com/DTPC.inc](http://www.Facebook.com/DTPC.inc)



Electronic copies of *Tortoise Tracks* are in **COLOR!**  
If you would prefer to receive an electronic copy, notify us  
by email at [dtpc@pacbell.net](mailto:dtpc@pacbell.net).

When visiting the desert, always remember to  
check under your vehicle for wildlife.

